excluded Volleyball team from participation in the coming Asian games; if so, the reasons therefor;

(b) the basic criteria for enlisting the sports disciplines for including in international events and the precise role of Indian Olympic Association therein;

(c) whether the Volleyball Federation of India has strongly criticized Indian Olympic Association for its decision; and

(d) what remedial measures his Ministry propose to take to ensure that the players are not disappointed after so much preparation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) It is not correct to say that the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has excluded the Volleyball team from participation in Asian Games at Bankok. However, the Government did not clear its participation as it did not qualify according to the criteria set by Government.

(b) The Government has decided the following basic criteria for selecting the individuals/teams for the Asian Games 1998. They were as follows:

(i) *For individuals:* Second place in the last Asian Games or Asian Championship, whichever is better.

(ii) *For Team events:* Third place in the last Asian Games or Asian Championship whichever is better.

The precise role of the IOA in this regard is that it should recommend the teams and individuals taking due account of the criterial fixed for the clearance for participation in international events.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The IOA and Federations will be asked to prepare our teams and sportspersons so that they qualify for participation in such international events.

Unemployed Engineers

1502. PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
SHRI RAGHVAJI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of unemployed engineers in the country; and

(b) what action is proposed to be taken to utilize their services through gainful unemployment?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) As per the latest report of the Institute of Applied Manpower Research, New Delhi, the number of unemployed engineers till 1996 were 23473 at Degree level and 60447 at Diploma level.

(b) Opportunities for Apprenticeship Training with stipend are available for the engineering pass-outs under the Apprenticeship Act which can not only help to enhance the professional competence but also provides better employment opportunities.

Formation of National Reconstruction Corps

1503. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have contemplated to form a National Reconstruction Corps; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons thnerefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) As laid down in the "National Agenda for Governance" of the Government and based on the discussions held with State Governments, Representatives of political parties, Members of Parliament, Youth Organisations, etc., a scheme for the

creation of a National Reconstruction Corps is under formulation.

(b) The scheme aims to provide an opportunity to youth in the age group of 18—35 to participate on a voluntary basis in various community based developmental programmes in areas, such as agriculture and rural development, literacy, health, environmental protection, promotion of arts, sports and culture etc.

Commission for women's rights

1504. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to State:

(a) whether members of the National Commission for Women have appealed to Government to appoint a Commission for Women's rights, to look after all the gender-related issues;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereon;

(c) whether Government propose to amend National Commission for Women Act to provide it with more powers;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when Government propose to fill up the post of Chairman of the said Commission, lying vacant for the last four months?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The post of Chairperson, National Commission for Women has been filled up.

Re-Introduction of private University Bill

1505. SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Private Universities (Establishment & Regulation) Bill, 1995 is likely to be re-introduced as the Self Financing Universities Bill; and

(b) if so, the highlights of the proposed Bill?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) and (b) The Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha on August 25, 1995. It was referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on HRD. The Committee submitted its Report with certain suggestions which are under active consideration of the Government.

The provisions are made in the Bill for prevention of commercialisation and mismanagement. Certain safeguards are also made in the Bill like protection of the interests of poor and meritorious students and interest of faculty members. The University Grants Commission has been given power to ensure academic standards. In addition to the aforesaid features of the Bill rest are as under:

Track Record of Sponsors is to be specified. Comments of the concerned State Government are to be sought. An amount of Rupees Ten Crores is to be deposited by the sponsores. 30 per cent of total seats are to be covered by the freeships and scholarships to be provided by the sponsores. Detailed Admission Procedure and Procedure for grant of freeships are to be approved by the UGC before the University becomes functional. Powers to approve First and subsequent Statutes and to consider Ordinances should rest with the Government. Thirty per cent Free seats will be provided for meritorious students. First Vice-Chancellor will be appointed by the Central Goverment. Method of appointment and conditions of service shall have the approval of the UGC.